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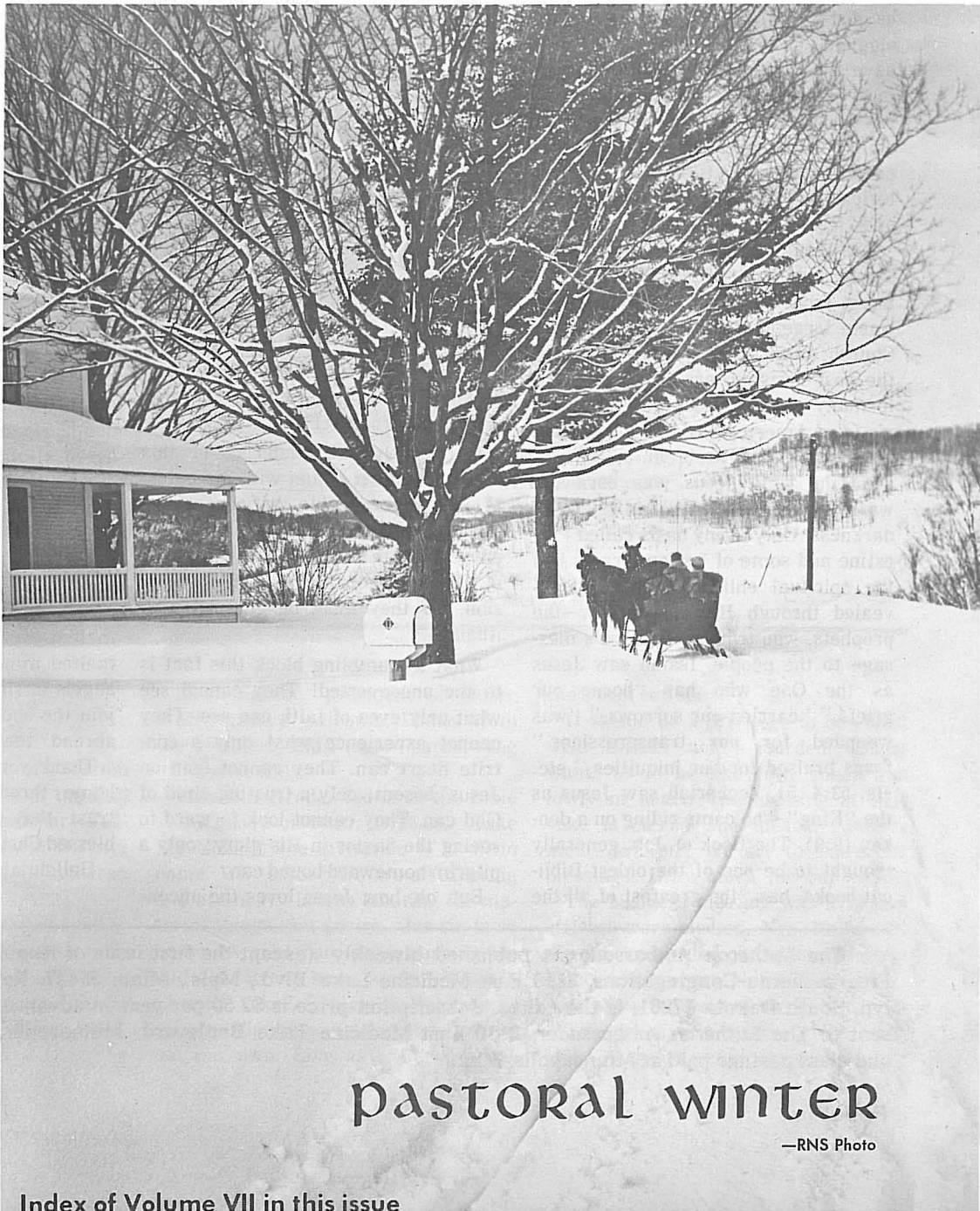
Vol. 7

December 23, 1969

No. 25

# *LUTHERAN*

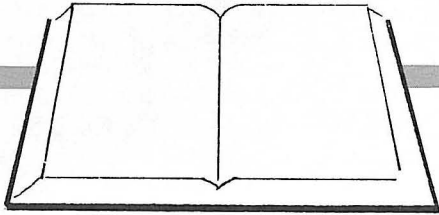
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**pastoral winter**

—RNS Photo

Index of Volume VII in this issue



## According to the Word

### THE STAR LED THEM

The fact of God's revelation has always stumped and frustrated people who insist that they must figure out everything by their own "brain power."

We have many such people among us today, among them many theologians, who, claiming that they have the "scientific" attitude, refuse to accept the Bible as absolute truth, but have made the Holy Scriptures an object of research in order to "discover" what in the Bible is divine, historical fact, and which is "myth" and "legend."

The results of such inquiry are now easily seen, for the confusion stemming from such unbelief has laid waste large sections of the Christian Church, until we must now speak of the post-Christian era with reference to many places in Europe, for example. And America, sad to say, is much beset by the same problem.

At the time Jesus was born the world was enveloped in gross pagan darkness. Only a tiny oasis called Palestine and some of her emigrants had the spiritual enlightenment God revealed through His chosen few—the prophets, who transmitted God's message to the people. Isaiah saw Jesus as the One who has "borne our griefs," "carried our sorrows," "was wounded for our transgressions," "was bruised for our iniquities," etc. (Is. 53:4, 5). Zechariah saw Jesus as the "King" who came riding on a donkey (9:9). The Book of Job, generally thought to be one of the oldest Biblical books, has "the greatest of all the

men of the east" saying, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (19:25).

Indeed, God promised to Adam and Eve, after their fall into sin, that the "seed" of the woman (Jesus) should bruise, or crush, Satan's head. The Lord did not send them out of Paradise without hope, but showed them that He had made provision for mankind to return to God.

How did people learn these things?

God revealed them to mankind.

The Creator of the universe made man with the capacity for "subduing" the earth; and great strides he has made! But man's "brain power" does not avail in spiritual matters, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14).

A more literal rendering of this verse would be: "Man with his natural senses is unable to accept the things that belong to God's Spirit because to him they are stupid, and he is unable to draw the right conclusion, for they must be grasped spiritually."

What a stumbling block this fact is to the unconverted! They cannot see what only eyes of faith can see. They cannot experience what only a contrite heart can. They cannot lean on Jesus' bosom; only a trusting child of God can. They cannot look forward to seeing the Savior in His glory; only a pilgrim homeward bound can.

But, oh, how Jesus loves the uncon-

verted, too! And He poured His grace upon a lost mankind. How? Paul tells us: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich" (II Cor. 8:9).

The birth of Jesus was a miracle of God's power and love. Our Lord, who made "all things," was born in an obscure Palestinian town, not in Rome, or Athens, or Alexandria, nor even Jerusalem. His nursery was a barn, and His cradle a manger. His mother was a plain virgin maiden, and His foster father a common carpenter. The newscasters of His birth were angels and shepherds. His reception by the politically and religiously "great" was one of mistrust, hostility and hatred, while "the common people heard him gladly." In His ministry He showed friend and foe alike that He loved them. In His death He died for those who murdered Him, as well as for His own disciples. In His Gospel He says He will save to the "uttermost" all those who come:

Wouldn't such compassion melt a heart of stone! Apparently many hearts are harder than that! Has He melted your heart? I am glad He has melted mine, and now I can join the angels in singing "Glory to God," and join the shepherds in making "known abroad" the good news.

Thank you for letting me visit your home through these six months. I trust that you are experiencing a blessed Christmas in HIM.

Hallelujah! What a SAVIOR!

Karl Stendal

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*The Lutheran Ambassador* is published biweekly (except the first issue of August) by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Mpls., Minn. 55427. Rev. Raynard Huglen, Roslyn, South Dakota 57261, is the editor. Subscription price is \$2.50 per year in advance. Subscriptions should be sent to *The Lutheran Ambassador*, 3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55427. Second-class postage paid at Minneapolis, Minn.

# Am I Robbing God?

## A MESSAGE ON THE STEWARDSHIP OF MONEY

by Pastor Marvin S. Undseth,  
Shevlin, Minn.

Don't be too quick to say No to the above question. Very few, if any, can truthfully say No to this question. This is one of the most frequent sins committed by nominal church members, as well as Christians. I can hear someone say, "I have never done such a thing." Don't be too sure that you are not guilty of this sin. Let us read what the Bible has to say about this in Malachi 3:8-9: "Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing me. But you say, How are we robbing you? In your tithes and offerings, says the Lord. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me; the whole nation of you."

The Israelites themselves were not aware of their sin of robbing and cheating God, yet God reminds them that this is the sin of which they were guilty. Could it be that some of us, or should I say most of us, are guilty of the same sin of which God accused the Israelites in the Malachi 3:8-10 passage?

The last thing, or at least one of the last things, that people are willing to turn over to God is their pocketbooks. You have perhaps heard of the Baptist who was about to be immersed for baptism when he remembered his pocketbook was still in his pocket. The pastor replied, "That's all right, let the pocketbook get baptized also. We already have too many unbaptized pocketbooks in our congregation."

Someone has wisely said, "You cannot keep right with God spiritually, if you do not keep right with God

financially." Try it on your neighbor. Cheat him out of a dollar and see what it will do to your friendship. If we do not treat God right financially, we do not need to expect real spiritual blessings. The Apostle Paul has something to say along this line in II Cor. 9:6, where we read: "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

The Christian is faced with the question of how much to give to the Lord's work. He recognizes that everything belongs to God, but how much should be given to the work of the Lord becomes quite a problem for many. For many it means that the Lord gets what is left over after all the bills are paid, if there is anything left over.

God knew how hard it would be for man to figure out how much to give to the work of the kingdom, so He laid down the principle of proportionate giving. The more we receive, the more we should give. The principle of proportionate giving began under the covenant of grace made with Abraham and continues in the covenant of grace today.

In the Old Testament times the people were required to give the tithe. This was expected and demanded of the people. Can we expect to give less in the New Testament era? In Malachi 3:10, we read: "Bring in the full tithes." The full tithe was 10% of their income. How many do we have today in our congregations and in the Association who give 10% of their income to the Lord's work? No one is so poor that they

cannot tithe.

Not only do the Scriptures teach tithing, but they also teach that the firstfruits, the first 10% of our income belongs to the Lord. In Proverbs 3:9-10, we read: "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the first-fruits of all thine increase." God wants the first-fruits, not the leftovers. Someone may say, "It takes every bit that I have to make a living. I just cannot make it on my small income. I have nothing left to give after I pay all my bills." Someone else may say, "Should we not pay our debts first?" We answer, Yes, and our first debt is to God. He is the first One that we should pay each month. The firstfruits belong to Him. The tithe belongs to God and if we do not give this to Him we are guilty of robbing God.

How is it with you? Has God received His fair share of that which you have been privileged to earn this year? If not, why not sit down right now and write a check out for the work of the Lord.

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations at the home base at Medicine Lake is in real need of more gifts for all phases of the work. Let us move forward, not permitting the work to be curtailed in any area. May the Lord help us all to place Him on the top of the list of those of whom we owe a debt each month. Let us give Him the first-fruits.

(Ed. Note: The above article was prepared at the request of the Stewardship Board, of which the writer is a member.)

## THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR SCHEDULE FOR 1970

(Please save for reference)

1. The first date given is the date on which the **Ambassador** is printed every two weeks.
2. The second date is the deadline at which material for that issue must reach **the Editor at Roslyn, S. Dak.**
3. Material which arrives late will not be included in the next issue unless it is of an emergency nature.
4. Unsolicited material is welcome, but will be used at the discretion of the editor and as space permits.
5. All material should be in double-spaced typing. Handwritten material will often be delayed.
6. Only one issue is published in August. Copy for that number must be in the editor's hands two weeks earlier than usual.
7. In sending notices of meetings, keep in mind that subscribers receive their papers up to a week following the date of publication.
8. Regular writers for the **Ambassador**, as well as other possible contributors, are asked to note the special issues so that they may write concerning those topics if they desire.

PUBLICATION DATE	EDITOR'S DEADLINE	SPECIAL	WMF BIBLE STUDY
January 6 January 20	December 20, 1969 January 3	New Year	Yes
February 3 February 17	January 17 January 31	<b>Ambassador</b> Anniversary Lent	Yes
March 3 March 17 March 31	February 14 February 28 March 14	Lent Easter	Yes
April 14 April 28	March 28 April 11	Mother's Day	Yes
May 12	April 25	Pentecost, Pre- Conference and Memorial Day	Yes
May 26	May 9	Pre-Conference	
June 9 June 23	May 23 June 6		Yes
July 7 July 21	June 20 July 3	Conference Reports Conference Reports	Yes
August 18	July 18		Yes
September 1 September 15 September 29	August 15 August 29 September 12		Yes
October 13 October 27	September 26 October 10	Reformation	Yes
November 10 November 24	October 24 November 7	Thanksgiving Advent	Yes
December 8 December 22	November 21 December 5	Christmas End of Year	Yes
January 5, 1971	December 19	New Year	

# MEET

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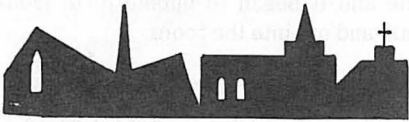
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# Churches

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# OF OUR

# FELLOWSHIP



**Today: The Eben Junction  
(Mich.) Parish**

### Calvary Lutheran Church

To trace the history of Calvary Lutheran Church, it is necessary to study Evangelical Lutheran Church of Eben Junction for that is the antecedent of the present Calvary. Evangelical Lutheran was a congregation of Suomi Synod and was organized in 1904. The congregation opposed by a large margin Suomi's merger with three other bodies to form the Lutheran Church

in America in 1961. In 1966 Calvary withdrew from the LCA and affiliated with the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations.

In leaving the LCA the congregation had to surrender its property to synod. But in 1969 it was able to buy back the church and again occupies that fine facility which was built only in 1962-63. It was dedicated on Aug. 25, 1963. The first church was constructed over the years 1908-14. The major work load in constructing both buildings was voluntary.

During the years when the church property was not available to the congregation, the old post office was used through the generosity of a friend and was eventually purchased. The congregation received many blessings while worshipping there. There were many Spirit-filled meetings, souls were saved and others re-dedicated their lives to Christ. Good Christian fellowship has been enjoyed with people of many different denominations.

When the church property was secured once again, a praise festival was held with the following guest pastors present: John Strand, Minneapolis, Minn., president of the AFLC, Herbert Franz, Cloquet, Minn., Al-

bert Hautamaki, Ishpeming, Mich., and Jerome Nikunen, Ontonagon, Mich. The services were well attended and a great spirit of thankfulness prevailed.

Calvary Lutheran is located in Eben Junction in Alger County, Upper Michigan.

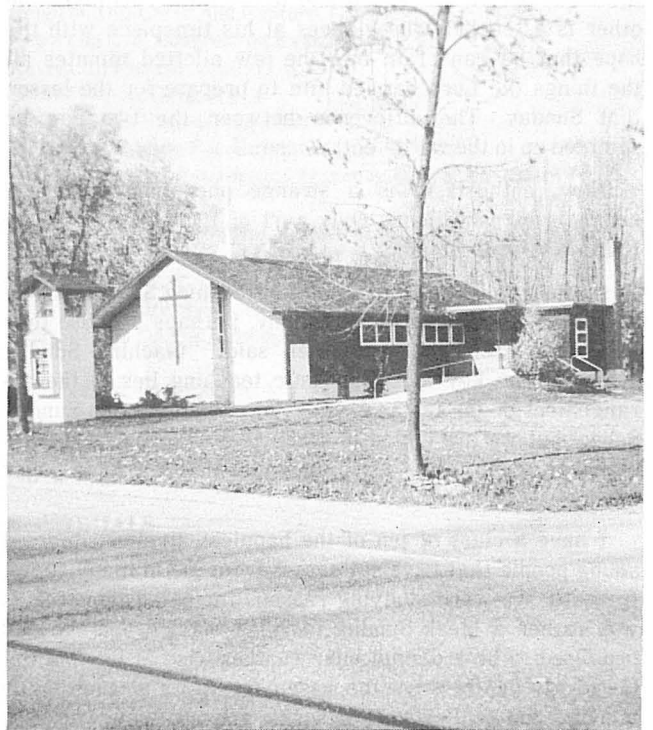
The following pastors have served in Eben Junction and the year in which service was begun follows the name: Jacob Hoikka, 1904; Student John Wargelin, 1906; Jacob Mantta, 1910; Albin Savola, 1911; Alva Rautalahti, 1912; Hugo Hillila, 1918; Antti Kononen, 1922; Frans Koski, 1938; Carl Tamminen, 1940; Arnold Stadius, 1941; Hugo Hillila, 1943; Onni Koski, 1945; Frank Pelkonen, 1947; John Hattula, 1950; Albert Hautamaki, 1950; Ahti Karjala, 1950; Leslie Niemi, 1950; Herbert Franz, 1955; Tauno Jarvinen, 1960; Janis Dombrovski, 1965; and Lay Pastor Otto Saukerson, 1966

Leslie Niemi, Albert Hautamaki and Ray Johnson are sons of the congregation who are in the Christian ministry. Two girls have entered missionary work for the Lord: Florence Elson Maki and Patricia Lelvis.

(Continued on page 8, column 1)



The parsonage at Eben Junction



Calvary Lutheran Church



## TEACH WITH ENTHUSIASM

by Mrs. Vernon R. Nelson

There are two kinds of clock-watching Sunday School teachers. There is the one who glances at his watch from time to time following the minutes as they crawl by until the class period has ended and it is time to dismiss. The other is a teacher who glances at his timepiece with the hope that he can cram into the few allotted minutes all the things the Lord has led him to prepare for the lesson that Sunday. The difference between the two can be summed up in the word "enthusiasm."

Now, enthusiasm is a strange phenomenon. Enthusiasm is extraordinary. Only part of its meaning can be found in your dictionary.

An intense and eager interest in teaching Sunday School is often a mission factor for many, perhaps because they are doing just what has been said, "teaching Sunday School." The key to enthusiastic teaching lies in the arrangement of the facts. We are not called to teach Sunday School but we are called to teach God's Word. Since I am called to teach God's Word, how can I be less than eager and interested?

I have a class of ten of the happiest, liveliest, blessed young people that have sat across from me in many years. Recently we were studying reasons for being thankful. It was rather a bleak Sunday morning outside and the day promised to be a dismal one, weather-wise at least. I followed my pupils down the basement stairs as they made a noisy and enthusiastic descent. I knew they were not scrambling with enthusiasm to their lessons but rather the boys were hurrying to reach the chairs that were as far

away from the girls as possible. This is not the type of enthusiasm that I felt in my heart.

Secretly I wanted to bunch them all together in the Lord. To have Him reach out his loving arms and wrap them up in His love. I wanted to send them out into the coming week all bundled up against the storm of life; so while we were praying I inwardly asked the Lord to wrap Himself around them.

He began to work marvels for me that morning. The greatest wonder, however, was worked in the teacher. As we turned the pages of the Bible and sought out the answers to the questions in our lesson the truth of God's Word began to fill me and it began to bubble forth from my heart into my mouth and out into the room.

My fashion-conscious girls began to look at me curiously and the girl-shy boys began to share with the class some of the answers they had found and written in their workbooks. One of the girls closed the session with prayer and soon they were gone out of the room with the same noisy enthusiasm . . . except that one girl lingered behind.

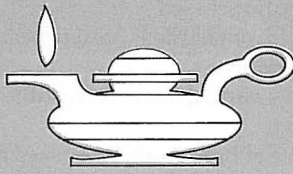
Perhaps we are called to teach for the one who lingers behind after class, that one special one who has a question or a problem or something important to share. When we finished talking, she buttoned on her coat and again I asked God to bundle her up in His love.

What has this to do with enthusiasm? Simply that I'll never be the same; I'll always see the one who lingers behind as I prepare my lesson. The Lord Jesus Christ has given us a special calling . . . "My Father's Business." Are you and I going about doing it with enthusiasm?

Teaching with enthusiasm comes from a special kind of freedom. The freedom of knowing that we are teaching not to impress God with the knowledge that we have acquired or to impress our students with it but that we teach because we have accepted and faced up to the dominant truth that Christ has become pre-eminent. That Christ stands in us and teaches through us the Word that He Himself proclaimed so long ago. He is working in and through us now. As I said in the beginning, this is a phenomenon. A God-inspired realization.

One of the greatest hindrances to enthusiastic teaching is self. I can stand in Christ's way and block the pupil's vision of Christ. When I put myself in my teaching, that is, teach from my mind and not from the heart, then Christ is relegated to the place of observer and is not given His rightful place as Master Teacher.

What a privilege it is for each one of us to permit the Lord to use us. The challenge lies with us. Are we willing to permit Him to have His way? Enthusiastic teaching is a gift from God, a vital, exuberant, life-giving power that will instill in the heart of the pupil a consuming desire to learn more of the Christ who dwells within the believer. Let us pray and seek the Lord for it daily.



# SCHOOL NEWS

## OUR YOUTH NEED YOU!

Today the focus is on youth! How unfortunate it is that the youth that are getting the attention and the publicity are the "flower children," the hippies who have set off a chain of protesting and rebellion against just about everything.

The future of the Association lies in the youth of today. We can thank God for our youth. They are not seen in protest marches, nor will you be able to number them among the long-haired rebels against the establishment. But we have found them in Bible camps, in colleges, in high schools and in our Bible School, serious young people, serious about living a life for Jesus Christ.

But our day is a day of phenomena, of contrasts and surprises, and of fears and frustrations. While we can view in our living rooms the colored pictures of men as they walk on the moon, we are also aware through many channels of the protesting of a war that few can understand, where youth are asked to be willing to give their lives for a cause less than victory. We hear on the one hand the pleas for more understanding among men, and on the other hand we are alarmed by the shifting standards of morality. It is little wonder that youth of today are confused and many times disillusioned. Their rebellions and protestings are loud cries for help. They are looking for something solid and secure in these days when foundations are crumbling, and even the Church is failing to stand firm and give the answers.

We must be alert to the needs of our youth today. We need to see the dangers that face them. We need to be open to them and compassionate in

their trials. We need also to see the opportunities of this age, and how we can be of help to them in entering into these opportunities.

We believe that the people of the Association have done this in establishing our Bible School four years ago. Our youth have been provided with the opportunity of being grounded in the Word, of having the opportunity of "finding themselves" in the atmosphere of the Bible School before they have to go out into our confused world.

Until the fall of 1966, a very, very small percentage of the youth of our Church were availing themselves of the then existing opportunities of a Bible School training. Our school began with thirteen students and has grown in these four years so that during the present year we have 64 students at our Bible School. We believe that we have only begun to see what God's purposes are for our school.

This brings us to the down-to-earth reality of maintaining our school. We are all very much aware of the rising costs these days, and this is true also in the Bible School operation. As we look at the receipts thus far, we find that less than half of the budget for our schools has come in, and we have only two months to go. We are able to maintain our schools only as members of our churches and friends of the school stand by us with their support, both in prayer and financially. The tuition cost to our students for a year of instruction is \$300.00, or \$100.00 per quarter. This is less than half of what is required for the operation of the Bible School. The remainder of the support for the Bible School, and the entire Seminary operation, must come from you. There is, of course, no tuition in the Seminary. In one of the

other Lutheran Bible Schools, the student pays only one-third of the tuition cost.

We believe that this is how it should be. A young person comes to Bible School because he senses a need in his life. He will not get credit for the courses that he takes here when he goes on to college. But our youth are willing to take a year, and many of them even two years, to become established in the Word, and to find God's plan for their lives. The support for our schools today is an investment for our church for tomorrow because these are the young people who will be the future leaders in our congregations and in our Church.

We want to give our youth the best possible training that we can when they come here to our school. We thank God for Pastor Laurel Udden who joined our staff last summer, and for Pastor Amos Dyrud who began his work after Thanksgiving. Both of these men are also teaching in the Seminary. Both of them are a tremendous blessing and boost to our schools. But if our school continues to grow, we shall also have to face the need of added staff.

As we view the present budget and the continued rising costs, we must soon make a decision as we seek to balance our budget. We will need to receive an added gift of love from every individual who believes in the Bible School program, or we shall have to add an additional increase to the tuition. It is possible that this may make it difficult for some of our youth to be able to come to Bible School.

We are laying the matter before you because we believe that you are concerned. We believe that you are convinced of the importance of our Bible School program for meeting the needs of youth today and for the building of our Church for tomorrow.

Our call comes to you for your support today. Our Youth need you!

(Ed. Note: The Board of Trustees has already voted a tuition increase for 1970-71. Even so, it is important that the accounts of the schools finish in the black this year.)



Pictured here are Lay Pastor Otto Saukerson and his wife Myrtle. They came to Eben Junction after service in the Dalton, Minn., and Beloit, Wis., parishes. They are from Chamberlain, S. Dak., where they were first engaged in farming and later in business in town. They have celebrated their golden wedding. In addition to other interests, Mr. Saukerson has been active in the Gideon Society.

The following poem was written on the occasion of the congregation moving back into its church in 1969 and was read at the first service there.

### THIS HOUSE

We thank thee, God our Father, for this day,  
For care and guidance all along the way,  
For life itself and needs provided well,  
For trials, testings; tongue could scarcely tell  
Our gratitude.

LORD JESUS, bless this house we pray,  
To always be a light along life's way.  
For those who seek, to find here blessed rest  
In Thee, Thou giver of the very best,  
Of peace and joy.

Guide those who hunger, here the Bread of life to find,  
To souls athirst, refreshing water, sight to blind.  
For weary ones, strength for the time of need,  
Here bless each one, each thought and word and deed,  
To rest in Thee.

Grant comfort when the heart is sorrow-pressed,  
Relief from burdens hard to bear and every test.  
To wayward, homeless, destitute, we pray,  
A glow of light from Thee, shed here, upon their way,  
To help them on.

For sin, forgiveness; grant for those who ask,  
Strength for Thy service, great and smaller task.  
A willing heart and mind for Thee to use at will,  
A vessel fit, here set apart and waiting till  
Thy Spirit guide.

Keep those who serve thee humble in their walk,  
To understand Thy will, to sing and pray and talk,  
Of Thy great kindness, love and mercy, too,  
Of grace bestowed, to start each day anew,  
To walk with Thee.  
—George Johnson

### TREASURER'S PROGRESS REPORT

February 1, 1969 to November 30, 1969

	Proposed Yearly Budget	Current Budget	Total Received
General Fund	\$ 36,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 29,911.16
Sem. & Bible School	51,175.00	42,645.83	25,146.20
Missions	72,800.00	60,666.66	41,798.95
Praise Program	30,000.00	25,000.00	13,166.62
	\$189,975.00	\$158,312.49	\$110,122.93
One Grand Fellowship			\$ 8,863.33
Library Fund			\$ 55.00
Legacies (to Missions)			10,704.34

### BIBLE VERSES

"I am not worthy of the least of all the steadfast love and all the faithfulness which thou hast shown to thy servant" (Genesis 32:10).

"So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober" (I Thessalonians 5:6).

"But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children,  
to those who keep His covenant and remember to do His commandments" (Psalm 103:17, 18).

### WINTER BIBLE CONFERENCE TO BE HELD IN THIEF RIVER FALLS

The 8th annual Winter Bible Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations will be held at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Thief River Falls, Minn., Melvin Walla, lay pastor, February 12-15, 1970.

Program details will be given later. In addition, information on housing for the conference will be made available in our next issue.

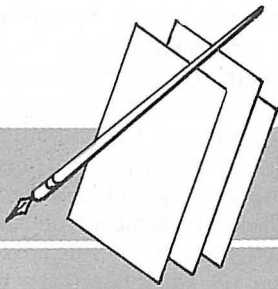
Plan now to attend the Winter Bible Conference.

### ADDRESS CORRECTION

The address given for the former Miss Miriam Ahlness in the Oct. 14 **Ambassador** was incorrect. As stated at that time, Miss Ahlness is now married, and she and her husband have this address:

Capt. and Mrs. Helge Iverson  
Lutheran Mission  
Box 676  
Madang, New Guinea





## EDITORIALS

### GOODBY TO A DECADE

When the bells toll at 12 o'clock in the morning on January 1, they will not only be marking the end of a year but of a decade. Conversely, they will mark not only the beginning of a year, but of a decade. Life is like that, we count by years and then, as on the abacus, we move one marker to stand for ten or the decade.

The 1960's are soon past. Mentally, we scan that span of time, remembering the joys and sorrows, the triumphs and defeats, the profits and losses that touched our individual lives. Blessed is that one who can see, even at close range, that all has worked for good in that strange way of God, and that one who can testify with Samuel at Ebenezer, "Hitherto the Lord has helped us" (I Samuel 7:12).

As to religious happenings, the 1960's have been tremendously eventful. During that decade the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations came into being. As the Lutheran Free Church moved inexorably into union with the American Lutheran Church, formation of the Association became an inevitability, although the what and how and who of that were much less certain than the why or the when. But God provided and doors were opened that we cannot attribute to anything but His providence. We must never say that we alone have the Spirit of God, but we have seen Him at work also among us. Brethren of other Lutheran communions joined in and added something of the richness of their heritages. And thus the fellowship grew and was strengthened.

The look ahead for the Association will be reserved for our next issue and will hopefully be given by the heads of various areas of our work. They have been invited to do that.

Beyond our immediate fellowship and experiences, the Sixties have produced events whose consequences have been far-reaching. Ranking high on the list is the Second Vatican Council convoked by the late Pope John XXIII on December 25, 1961. That Council brought the Roman Catholic Church out of an incredible cocoon of unreality but also opened a Pandora's box of problems that even another decade will not see unraveled. No one today can satisfactorily define or explain the Roman Church.

The years 1960-69 have been heady ones for church mergers. Several have been accomplished, others are in the works. One of the latter, the Consultation on Church Union (COCU) would bring together approximately 25 million Protestants. Some denominational leaders will not rest until every synodical designation is removed even though every church denomination of size is divided into two or more camps and the use of the word "fellowship" to describe them must be used loosely if at all. The Holy Spirit has been blamed for some very strange "goings on" in these past years.

In the decade ending, the "God is dead" movement arose and subsided in quick fashion. Of course, such thinking has existed for a long time, but it got some good publicity for a while. No, God is not dead, although unfortunately many people will not allow Him to be the living holy presence He wants to be for them.

The Sixties have seen a world congress on evangelism and several regional ones. But in spite of them and the fact that the Gospel has reached more people than ever before, there has been no widespread revival movement. There have been notable examples of soul-winning, there have been some great personal and congregational efforts, blessed of the Holy Spirit, but no fires of awakening and repentance burn across the land and we wonder why.

The 1960's witnessed a reappearance of the charismatic movement, particularly manifested in speaking in tongues. Evidences of this were to be found in most every denominational grouping, including the Roman Catholic Church. But it is a difficult phenomenon to assess. Some manifestations seemed to be genuine, others proved false. Any overall impact on society from the charismatic movement is not known at this time.

The decade drawing to a conclusion saw a quickening of interest in social concerns among Christians. This was good. There could still be much more. On the other hand, some denominations and church leaders became so involved in social issues that the Church's primary task of preaching the Gospel was ignored or sadly neglected by some. Such persons and groups will thus enter the Seventies finding themselves cornered by various pressure groups demanding that they respond as groups when it really ought to be the Church's responsibility to thrust out transformed individuals into society who will live the Christian ethic in all situations.

So many things could be written about the '60's but time and space forbid more. Little has been said of the host of personalities who have made the news in the religious world. There have been those who have moved through the decade with calm, unruffled faith, bearing

witness to an anchor that holds in all circumstances. And then there have been those who have gone about, even in the name of Christ, without the sense of having found life's answers in Him. Their trumpets have sounded uncertainly.

A decade ends on December 31. What has happened in the last ten years is the stuff, like it or not, which will influence the coming years as the Lord gives them to us. It is good to know that the foundation standeth sure and whoever builds on Jesus Christ will not be put to shame. Humanly speaking, it isn't easy to face the Seventies with optimism, but in the belief that Christ is the triumphant One we can go forward with confidence.

### THANK YOU, PASTOR STENDAL

For the past six months Pastor Karl Stendal of Pukwana, S. Dak., has been the writer of our regular devotional feature, "According to the Word," found on page two of every *Ambassador*. With his final article today, he concludes this writing service for our church and a new man steps into the task.

Pastor Stendal's articles have been very helpful to many people, we are sure. He writes in a simple, orderly fashion which makes the truth he is presenting easy to grasp. That gift, whether in writing or speaking, and Pastor Stendal has it in both, not only takes away the excuse of not understanding what is presented, but also leads to the finding of answers by seeking souls. Through his writings, and this includes the many helpful illustrations, many people have been helped and blessed.

The assignment came to Pastor Stendal just as he was beginning his pastorate at Pukwana and Chamberlain. It was a difficult time to agree to this added responsibility, but he willingly did so. Thank you, Pastor Stendal, for sharing this writing ministry with our readers for these months.

The Editor finds in introducing the next writer of "According to the Word" that he has personally known this man longer than he has known any other pastor on the Association clergy roster, over thirty years. That acquaintanceship goes back to the days when Pastor Hans Tollefson was a student pastor at Fortuna, N. Dak., and your editor was a boy in nearby Westby, Mont.

Today he serves the AFLC congregations in Hatton, Portland and Buxton, N. Dak., where he came, incidentally, as the successor to the Editor. It is a busy parish, serving three fine communities in the thriving Red River Valley.

We welcome Pastor Tollefson to this assignment and are sure that he will have much to share from the Word of God out of his experience as a pastor in parishes ranging from British Columbia and Oregon out West to the plains of North Dakota. God's blessings be upon our devotional series.

### DOES THE ALC WANT THE NCC?

The *Lutheran Ambassador* is on record as believing

that the American Lutheran Church will vote membership in the National Council of Churches (NCC) in 1970 (see *The L.A.*, Jan. 24, 1967). The reason given then, and it still holds, was that it is a logical step for a church which belongs to the World Council of Churches, as the ALC does, to join the national or American counterpart, the NCC.

Ecumenical leanings continue strong in the ALC, not so much in the grass roots, but within the synodical leadership, theological faculties and the clergy, and, like it or not, these are the people who carry the "clout" all too often in church affairs.

Not that people always follow their leaders. Sometimes the gulf becomes so great that something has to give. In this regard it is well to consider the recent triennial general assembly of the NCC held in Detroit. Several weeks before the assembly the American people had shown that the majority were supporting the President's efforts to end the war in Vietnam and were willing to give him a somewhat free hand in arranging US disengagement from that tragic conflict. But the NCC assembly in Detroit passed resolutions disagreeing with the US administration's explanation of the War as a struggle to defend freedom from Communist aggression, urged a complete pull-out of US troops by the end of 1970, and called for an international investigation of reported civilian massacres by US troops. We do not know if the assembly called for any investigation of Communist atrocities.

You might be inclined to say "so what?" The spirit of the meeting might better be assessed by noting a couple of quotations from Louis Cassels, one of the two or three most respected religion reporters in America today, in his summary report of the assembly: "But in five days of marathon oratory only two speakers suggest that there might be some things about America to which its people could point with pride, and one of them was severely heckled.

"By contrast, there were scores of speeches voicing shame, disgust or outrage at what America is doing in Vietnam."

And this:

"The heroes of the assembly were the youths who have refused to serve in the armed forces" (*The Minneapolis Star*).

Thus far, Louis Cassels of United Press-International. The question we raise is this, how well did the delegates at Detroit represent the feelings of the people of the various denominations and congregations in the U.S.? (The NCC has about 42 million members.) Without doubt, every possible shade of opinion about Vietnam and every other subject is to be found in a membership of 42 million. But is the message of the Detroit assembly the real voice of the people? Would it be the real voice of the ALC if it belonged to the NCC? Those are the questions to be answered.

Certainly the Detroit conclave had **some** good things to say about social concerns. But there must have been many vital themes left quite neglected by a convention of churches purportedly meeting in the name of Jesus Christ.

Our prognostication is that the ALC will join the NCC in 1970, but we won't be unhappy if we are proven wrong.

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### ONA BRODEN LED BIBLE STUDY AT NORTH CENTRAL RALLY

"Take my yoke upon you" from Matt. 11:29 was the theme of the Fall Rally of the Women's Missionary Federation of the North Central District on October 10, 1969, at Dovre Lutheran Church in Winger.

The meeting opened with the singing of "Ye Lands to the Lord make a Jubilant Noise" and "Jesus, Master, Son of God." Mrs. Undseth from Shevlin led in devotions, reading Matt. 11:24, I Peter 2:21 and I John 5:3.

Mrs. Hanson, president of Dovre WMF, gave a welcome. Ladies from the McIntosh and Fosston parish sang "Channels Only."

Miss Ona Broden led us in the Bible study based on Matt. 11:28-30, "Take My Yoke." The invitation is to **all to come**. Why come? We are all laboring and are heavy-laden; laboring for material things that perish. Our sin is so heavy. A yoke can make work easier and also it can be a burden. What is Christ's yoke? His cross. We are to take up His cross in doing His will and not our own. Live as a Christian so

the world can see it.

It should be a privilege to be yoked with Christ, not a burden. Christ wants us to be like Him, meek and lowly in heart. The blessing of that yoke is eternal life, peace, contentment, joy, etc. We are to share our blessings. Pray **much** for our youth.

The business meeting was held and officers were elected. Mrs. Ed Mathison was re-elected president and Mrs. Morris Moan was elected secretary. A delicious dinner was served.

Evangelist R. Stueland, Renville, Minn., gave a greeting from Psalm

40 and we were favored by a number in song from the Maple Bay ladies chorus. Miss Judith Wold, WMF executive secretary, gave the afternoon message. She also explained and promoted the 1970 budget.

Is time running out? Are we bearing fruit? Ask the Lord to work in our lives.

Just a Whispered Prayer" was sung by Mrs. Raaen from Erskine. The offering was taken and "O Jesus I have Promised" was sung and Pastor F. Swenson of Winger closed our day by pronouncing the benediction.

—Mrs. Morris Moan, Secretary

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